

Message Text

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FOR ARA/CEN DIRECTOR MATTHEWS

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: OGEN, HO
SUBJ: AFSP: FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS
TDEF: (A) 1977 TEGUCIGALPA 5956, (B) 1977 TEGUCIGALPA 5669,
(C) FIGGINS/STAHLMAN TELECON 5/8/78

1. EMBASSY SUBMITS THE FOLLOWING RE-STATEMENT OF ITS
RATIONALE REGARDING THE NON-FEASIBILITY OF THE ELIMINATION
OF ONE AMERICAN SECRETARY POSITION AT THIS POST WHICH WAS
RECOMMENDED IN THE 1977 INSPECTION REPORT.

2. THE RECOMMENDATION GREW OUT OF AN ALLEGATION BY A SECRE-
TARY NO LONGER HERE THAT SHE WAS UNDER-OCCUPIED. THE REASONS
FOR HER ALLEGATION STEM PRIMARILY FROM SERIOUS PERSONAL CON-
FLICTS BETWEEN THIS EMPLOYEE AND HER SUPERVISOR (ALSO DE-
PARTED) WHICH LIMITED HER USEFULNESS. DESPITE EFFORTS BY
HER NEW SUPERVISOR TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION DURING THE TEN
MONTHS PRIOR TO THE INSPECTION, A PROLONGED DISPUTE BETWEEN
THE SECRETARY AND HER PREVIOUS SUPERVISOR OVER AN ADVERSE
EVALUATION REDUCED HER EFFECTIVENESS. SHE WAS QUITE BITTER
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OVER THE EPISODE AND IN THE EMBASSY'S JUDGEMENT RETALIATED BY
ALLEGING UNDER-UTILIZATION.

2. THE INSPECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION WAS PREMISED ON HIS PRO-
POSAL TO MOVE THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SECTIONS TO ADJACENT
OFFICE SUITES TO PERMIT TIME-SHARING OF ONE SECRETARY. THIS
PROVED IMPOSSIBLE DUE TO SPACE LIMITATIONS. EMBASSY POLOFF

SHARED SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT IN HIS LAST ASSIGNMENT. IT DIDN'T WORK AND THE POSITION WAS RE-ESTABLISHED.

3. SUBSEQUENT TO THE INSPECTION, HONDURAS EMERGED AS A SUBSTANTIAL SPRINGBOARD IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND A HAVEN FOR COCAINE LABORATORIES AND NARCOTICS RINGS. CONSIDERABLE WORKLOAD RESULTED AS THE EMBASSY HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY INVOLVED IN SUPPORTING US AGENCIES' INTERDICTION EFFORTS AND IN ESTABLISHING A NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM. DEA ALSO ASSIGNED AN AGENT TDY AT THE EMBASSY, WHOSE OFFICE IS SERVICED BY THE ECONOMIC SECTION SECRETARY. THE ADDITIONAL WORKLOAD COULD NOT ADEQUATELY BE HANDLED BY ONE SECRETARY SHARED BY POL AND ECON.

4. THERE IS A MINIMUM SECRETARIAL STAFFING LEVEL, BELOW WHICH AN EMBASSY CANNOT FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY, AND WE BELIEVE THAT LEVEL AT THIS POST IS FOUR AMERICAN SECRETARIES. FURTHER CUTS WOULD RESULT IN A DISPROPORTIONATE REDUCTION IN EFFECTIVENESS -- A GEOMETRIC RATHER THAN SIMPLE ARITHMETIC LOSS. THERE IS NO AMERICAN SECRETARY IN EITHER THE JAO (ADMIN) OR CONSULAR SECTIONS, BOTH OF WHICH HAVE HEAVY WORKLOADS DUE TO GROWTH OF USAID AND CONSULAR ACTIVITY AND STAFFING. A REDUCTION FROM THE PRESENT FOUR SECRETARIES TO THREE WOULD HAVE ADDITIONAL ADVERSE EFFECTS:

(A) THE CAPABILITY OF SHIFTING SECRETARIES AND/OR WORK BE-
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BETWEEN FUNCTIONAL SECTIONS AND THE AMB/DEC OFFICES TO COVER ABSENCES OF SECRETARIES WOULD BE LARGELY LOST. DUE TO HOME, ANNUAL, SICK AND R/R LEAVE (HARDSHIP POST) AND GAPS BETWEEN ASSIGNMENTS, UP TO 12 WEEKS ARE LOST ANNUALLY PER SECRETARY, SO GAPS EXIST UP TO 48 WEEKS A YEAR. (IF LANGUAGE CLASS IS INCLUDED THE TOTAL COULD EXCEED 52 WEEKS.) THIS WOULD SERIOUSLY HAMPER THE AMBASSADOR AND DCM, BECAUSE A POL/ECON SECRETARY COULD NO LONGER BE CALLED ON TO SUBSTITUTE IN THE FROM OFFICE. POL/ECON WORK WOULD COME TO AN END STANDSTILL ABOUT 12 WEEKS PER YEAR.

(B) HAVING ONLY THREE SECRETARIES FOR THE OFF-HOUR DUTY ROSTER WOULD UNFAIRLY INTERFERE WITH THEIR FREE TIME.

(C) ONE POL/ECON SECRETARY COULD NOT ADEQUATELY SERVICE TWO PHYSICALLY SEPARATE SECTIONS DUE TO A CONTINUOUS FLOW OF WORK, TELEPHONE CALLS, VISITORS AND SECURITY NEEDS.

5. FSL SECRETARIES IN POL AND ECON CANNOT BE SUBSTITUTED FOR AMERICAN SECRETARIES, BECAUSE THEY ARE FULLY ENGAGED IN TRANSLATING NOTES AND LETTERS, WORKING FOR THE AMB/DCM, TYPING A HEAVY WTDR, TOP AND OTHER COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL

WORK. NOR CAN THEY HANDLE THE SUBSTANTIAL CLASSIFIED WORK-
LOADS OF THESE SECTIONS.
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